**Country: Brazil** 

Name of politician: Jair Bolsonaro

Title of Speech: Bolsonaro's speech at Porto Velho, Roraima

Date of Speech: August 31, 2018.

Category: Campaign

**Grader:** Eduardo Ryô Tamaki **Date of grading:** 03/12/2018

## Final Grade (delete unused grades): 0.1

O A speech in this category uses few if any populist elements. Note that even if a speech expresses a Manichaean worldview, it is not considered populist if it lacks some notion of a popular will.

| Populist  | Pluralist   |
|---|---|
| It conveys a Manichaean vision of the world,          | The discourse does not frame issues in moral                            |
| that is, one that is moral (every issue has a         | terms or paint them in black-and-white.                                 |
| strong moral dimension) and dualistic                 | Instead, there is a strong tendency to focus on                         |
| (everything is in one category or the other,          | narrow, particular issues. The discourse will                           |
| "right" or "wrong," "good" or "evil") The             | emphasize or at least not eliminate the                                 |
| implication—or even the stated idea—is that           | possibility of natural, justifiable differences of                      |
| there can be nothing in between, no fence-            | opinion.  |
| sitting, no shades of grey. This leads to the use     | - "There are a lot of good people in another                            |
| of highly charged, even bellicose language.           | party. We want to unite and unite Brazil."                              |
|   | - "We respect everyone who supports other candidates: they are welcome" |
|   | - "We have how to change the destiny of                                 |
|   | Brazil we want to unite all from north to                               |
|   | south from East to West".   |
| The moral significance of the items mentioned         | The discourse will probably not refer to any                            |
| in the speech is heightened by ascribing              | reified notion of history or use any cosmic                             |
| <b>cosmic proportions</b> to them, that is, by        | proportions. References to the spatial and                              |
| claiming that they affect people everywhere           | temporal consequences of issues will be                                 |
| (possibly but not necessarily across the world)       | limited to the material reality rather than any                         |
| and across time. Especially in this last regard,      | mystical connections.   |
| frequent references may be made to a reified          | - "17 years that I stayed in our beloved                                |
| notion of "history." At the same time, the            | Brazilian army"   |
| speaker will justify the moral significance of        | - "Four years ago I decided to run for the                              |
| his or her ideas by tying them to <b>national and</b> | presidency of the republic. We had no                                   |
| religious leaders that are generally revered.         | party, we knew that no one would want to                                |
|   | join us and we would practically have to rely only on you"              |
| Although Manichaean, the discourse is still           | Democracy is simply the calculation of votes.                           |
| democratic, in the sense that the good is             | This should be respected and is seen as the                             |
| embodied in the will of the majority, which is        | foundation of legitimate government, but it is                          |
| seen as a unified whole, perhaps but not              | not meant to be an exercise in arriving at a                            |

necessarily expressed in references to the "voluntad del pueblo"; however, the speaker ascribes a kind of unchanging essentialism to that will, rather than letting it be whatever 50 percent of the people want at any particular moment. Thus, this good majority is romanticized, with some notion of the common man (urban or rural) seen as the embodiment of the national ideal.

preexisting, knowable "will." The majority shifts and changes across issues. The common man is not romanticized, and the notion of citizenship is broad and legalistic.

There is no reference to the popular will nor to something close to that. He does say that the he has something that the others does not: The people; but that is as far as it goes.

The evil is embodied in a minority whose specific identity will vary according to context. Domestically, in Latin America it is often an economic elite, perhaps the "oligarchy," but it may also be a racial elite; internationally, it may be the United States or the capitalist, industrialized nations or international financiers or simply an ideology such as neoliberalism and capitalism.

The discourse avoids a conspiratorial tone and does not single out any evil ruling minority. It avoids labeling opponents as evil and may not even mention them in an effort to maintain a positive tone and keep passions low.

- "Let us classify the actions of the MST as terrorism. Those who invade property in the countryside or in the city are not citizens and has to be treated with the rigors of the law"
- "Let's boot the gender ideology, let's sweep away communism and the São Paulo forum"

Crucially, the evil minority is or was recently in charge and subverted the system to its own interests, against those of the good majority or the people. Thus, systemic change is/was required, often expressed in terms such as "revolution" or "liberation" of the people from their "immiseration" or bondage, even if technically it comes about through elections.

There is the presence of an evil minority who was recently in charge and subverted the system to its own interests, but it does not go as far as arguing for a systemic change

- "This Brazil besides being great is a rich country and its people cannot continue being poor for lack of politicians who are not ashamed"

The discourse does not argue for systemic change but, as mentioned above, focuses on particular issues. In the words of Laclau, it is a politics of "differences" rather than "hegemony."

Because of the moral baseness of the threatening minority, non-democratic means may be openly justified or at least the

Formal rights and liberties are openly respected, and the opposition is treated with courtesy and as a legitimate political actor. The

minority's continued enjoyment of these will be seen as a generous concession by the people; the speech itself may exaggerate or abuse data to make this point, and the language will show a bellicosity towards the opposition that is incendiary and condescending, lacking the decorum that one shows a worthy opponent.

- "Let us classify the actions of the MST as terrorism. Those who invade property in the countryside or in the city are not citizens and has to be treated with the rigors of the law" discourse will not encourage or justify illegal, violent actions. There will be great respect for institutions and the rule of law. If data is abused, it is either an innocent mistake or an embarrassing breach of democratic standards.

- "Let's vote well, with all the respect that everyone deserves"

## **Overall Comments (just a few sentences):**

That was a short speech and there were only a few populist elements. He does identify and frame a minority as being the "evil", the "enemy", but it is only on a certain part of his discourse. There is the presence of an evil minority who was recently in charge and subverted the system to its own interests, but it does not go as far as arguing for a systemic change. It does argue for a change, when he says things like "save our Brazil" but that is it, there is no clear nor explicit strategy of how to change the system – besides voting for him. There is a somewhat subtle presence of an "everything counts" approach, but as I said, it is somewhat subtle. When talking to the opposition he utilizes a bellicose language even going as further as referring to terrorism. That is all. There are no references or whatsoever to the popular will, to a "general will", no use of cosmic proportion, and no Manichaean distinction nor a dualistic one.